THE CIRCUMSTANCES Before and after the SPEECH OF WILLIAM LATE Viſcount Stafford.

THe two Sheriffs with a conſiderable number of Gentlemen on Horſeback went to the *Tower-Gate*, and there demanded *W. Howard*, late Viſcount *Stafford*. Between nine and ten a Clock, a Gentleman belonging to the Lieutenant of the *Tower* told the Sheriffs, that the Lieutenant would wait upon them preſently, and bring the Priſoner to the Bars; to which the Sheriffs anſwered, that they muſt preſerve the Priviledge and Bounds of the City: An Officer replied; Sir, we were ordered to draw up two Companies from the Gate to the Bar, and there you are to receive the Priſoner.

Sheriffs. Gentlemen, we will preſerve the Liberties of the City, and are come at the Gate to demand the Priſoner; whether the Lieutenant will deliver him or no, we demand; and accordingly he was delivered to the Sheriffs between the Gate and Bars.

Before the Priſoner came, ſeveral people being upon the Scaffold; among which, two that were appointed to write.

The Heads-man came up with two Blocks, one old, one new, in a Bag; alſo the Axe covered with a Cloth. The Block being taken out, the new Block was covered over with black, and laid upon a piece of black Bays, about two yards and a half long, upon which the Priſoner was to ſtretch himſelf. Then the Coffin was brought up, being colour'd with two Letters, *W. S.* 1680. Then *W. S.* came upon the Scaffold, and asked for the Executioner.

A. Here he is.

Staf. *Have you received money for the Cloaths?*

A. No. Then his Man took out a Purſe of five pound, which the H. man objected againſt, and *W. S.* gave him two Guinnies more.

His Speech was every word writ; which after he had read to the people, being more than 30000 in number to ſee Juſtice done upon the Traytor, he turned about, and kneeling down prayed in *Engliſh* and *Latin*. Next he lifted up his hands, ſtanding up, and ſaid, *I beſeech thee God not to avenge my Innocent Blood upon any man in the whole Kingdom, no not againſt thoſe who by their Perjuries have brought me here; for I profeſs before Almighty God, that I never combined againſt the Kings Life, nor any body elſe; but whatever I did was only to procure liberty for the Proteſtant Diſſenters, and the* Romiſh *Religion: And as for the D. of* York, *I do here declare upon my Salvation, I know of no Deſign that he ever had a-*

gainst the King, *but hath ever behaved himself as a loving Loyal Brother ought to do.*

So now upon my Salvation I have ſaid true all that I have ſaid, and I pray God to have mercy upon my Soul.

*T*hen he delivered the *Latin* Prayer to the Sheriff *Bethel.*

After which he went round the Scaffold and ſpake to the Multitude thus, *I pray God bleſs the King, and bleſs you all, eſpecially the Kings Loyal Subjects; for I know you have a good and gratious King as ever Raigned, God forgive me my Sins, I forgive all the World, even thoſe Fellows that brought me here, and I pray God ſend them no worſe Puniſhment then to tell the Truth, and ſo God bleſs you all.*

*T*hen a *Miniſter* applyed himſelf and ſaid, *Sir*, You diſown the Indulgences of the *Romiſh Church.*

*T*o which he anſwered with a great Paſſion.

Sir, What have you to do with my Religion, however I do ſay, that the Church of Rome *allows no Indulgences for* Murder, Lying, *&c. and whatever I have ſaid is true.*

Min. Have You received no Abſolution. Anſw. *I have received none at all.*

Min. You ſaid, that you never ſaw thoſe Witneſſes.

Anſw. *I never ſaw any of them but* Dugdale, *and that was at a time, when I ſpake to him about a Footboy.*

*T*hen his man took off his Perriwig and upper Coat, and with a pair of Sizers cut off the Collar of his Maſters Shirt, After which *W. S.* lyes down in a white Satin Waſt-Coat, a quilted sky Coloured ſilk Cap with Lace turn'd up, *&c.*

He gave his Watch to a Gentleman, and Crucifix to his Page.

Having fitted his Neck to the Block, riſe up upon his Knees, and prayed to himſelf, then takes the Block and imbraced it, *T*hen his Servant cut off more of the Linen, in all which time he ſent up ſhort Prayers, *T*hat Chriſt would receive his Spirit, then lying down, and praying upon the Block, the Sheriff *Corniſh* askt of the Headſman, if he had given him any Sign, He Anſwered *No*, whereupon *W. S.* roſe up and asked, *what they wanted*, to which it was anſwered, *What ſign will you give*, &c.

Anſw. *No Sign at all, Take your own time, Gods will be done.*

Whereupon the Executioner ſaid, *I hope you forgive me*, he made Anſwer, I *do*. *T*hen lying down again, *T*wo of his Servants came with a piece of black Silk to receive the head; then the Headſman took the Axe in his hand, and after ſome pauſe gave the Blow, which was cleverly done, ſave the Cutting off of a little Skin, neither Body nor Head when ſevered ſtruggled to any purpoſe, but only quivered a little.

After which the Headſman took out the *Head* from the Silk, and held it up to all, Crying aloud, *Here is the Head of a Traytor againſt the King*, after which the Corps with the *Head* wrapt in Silk was put into a Coffin, and all carried to the *Tower.*

This with the Speech was taken by *J. Rois*, who was appointed by both Sheriffs for that very purpoſe.

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